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Oral Questions

Pursuant to Rule 47a of the Rules of Procedure

**for QUESTION TIME
of the part-session of April 1979**

QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

1. Question by Sir Geoffrey de FREITAS (H-486/78)

Subject : The teaching of languages in schools

What are the Governments doing to encourage the teaching in schools of the official languages of the Community?

2. Question by Mr STETTER (H-497/78)

Subject : Common EEC policy on liner traffic

Does the Council agree that ratification of the UN Treaty on liner traffic by the individual Member States would be in contravention of the EEC Treaty, and will it therefore adopt a common policy on liner traffic as soon as possible in cooperation with the other OECD countries, as proposed by the Commission and the European Parliament?

3. Question by Mr ELLIS (H-31/79)^x

Subject: Salaries paid to Members of Parliament in the nine Member States

In view of the opinion expressed by the European Council meeting in Bonn in December 1978 about the salaries of Members of the directly elected European Parliament, could the Council indicate the salaries paid to Members of Parliament in the nine Member States and the other allowances, tax exemptions and expenses they can claim?

^xFormer oral question without debate (O-133/78), converted into a question for Question Time

4. Question by Mr SEEFELD (H-32/79)^x

Subject: Approximation of legislation in the Community
relating to traffic offences

As the European Community becomes increasingly integrated, citizens of one Member State driving in another frequently find that as foreigners they are punished more severely for comparatively minor traffic offences than would be nationals of the Member State they are visiting. Equally, citizens of one Member State often escape punishment for more serious traffic offences committed in another Member State because there is no means of enforcing a foreign judicial decision.

We therefore ask the Foreign Ministers;

How many Member States have ratified and incorporated into national legislation the European Convention on the Punishment of Road Traffic Offences of 30 November 1964?

What possibilities do the Foreign Ministers see of achieving the early ratification of this Convention and its incorporation into national legislation in all the Member States?

What other possibilities do they see of achieving approximation of the legislation in the Community relating to traffic offences at the earliest opportunity?

Finally, what possibilities do they see of preventing any discrimination in the punishment of foreign nationals for traffic offences in the Member States?

^x Former oral question without debate (O-148/78), converted into a question for Question Time

5. Question by Mr DEWULF (H-44/79)^x

Subject: Execution of the 'Special Action'

Bearing in mind the urgency of the matter, can the Council state what progress has been made in the execution of the 'Special Action' decided on by the Conference on International Economic Cooperation (CIEC) in Paris, with particular regard to the European side, which is committed to contributing a sum of 385 million dollars to this action?

6. Question by Mr INCHAUSPE (H-5/79)

Subject: Repercussions of the possible accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal on the level of agricultural producer prices

In the context of the possible enlargement of the Community to include the three new applicant countries, has the Council studied the possible repercussions of their accession on the level of agricultural producer prices? Will it apply the compensatory amount arrangements, which create distortions?

7. Question by Mr BORDU (H-14/79)

Subject: De facto extension of the powers of the European Parliament

Does the Council feel that the changes in the budgetary procedure since 1975 have led to a de facto increase in the budgetary powers of the European Parliament?

^x Former oral question without debate (O-146/78), converted into a question for Question Time

8. Question by Mr L'ESTRANGE (H-16/79)

Subject : Fourth European Development Fund

Is the Council satisfied that the rate of spending of the Fourth European Development Fund is sufficient ? If the Council is not satisfied, what can it do to encourage the quick transfer of the funds ?

9. Question by Mr DONDELINGER (H-20/79)

Subject: Sexual mutilation of women in black Africa

Does not the Council consider that the sexual mutilation inflicted on thirty million African women, which has aroused the justified indignation of feminist movements in Europe, makes it ever more essential to include provisions on the protection of basic human rights in the new Convention of Lomé?

10. Question by Mr KAVANAGH (H-29/79)

Subject : Employment Protection Schemes

At its recent meeting, the European Council expressed its concern about the employment situation, and instructed the Council to study measures which should help to improve it; will the Council include in its studies, an examination of possible measures for employment protection schemes, to ensure that the introduction of the EMS does not lead to increased unemployment in the weaker economies, particularly in view of the possible consequences of difficulties on the oil market?

11. Question by Mr RYAN (H-39/79)

Subject : Oil Shortage

As Ireland is suffering serious damage to agricultural and industrial production and employment by reason of an acute shortage of petrol, diesel and fuel oils what steps are being taken to implement community obligation for member states to come to one another's aid in the event of an oil shortage ?

QUESTIONS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE NINE MEMBER STATES
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEETING IN POLITICAL COOPERATION

12. Question by Sir Derek WALKER-SMITH (H-481/78)

Subject : Final Act of the Helsinki Conference and the
reunification of families

To ask the Ministers whether they have any progress to report in respect of the resolution adopted by the Parliament on 18 January 1978¹ following the SCLEBA report on compliance by the signatory states with their obligations under the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, with particular reference to the reunification of families; and whether the German Democratic Republic has made any response in the matter.

13. Question by Sir Geoffrey de FREITAS (H-496/78)

Subject : Europe Day - 5 May

What plans do the governments of the Community have for encouraging each year the celebration of 5 May as Europe Day in accordance with the decision of all nine governments of the Community taken at the Council of Europe on 31 October 1964?

14. Question by Mr Spicer (H-505/78)

Subject : SWAPO and Namibia

Will the Foreign Ministers bring pressure to bear at the United Nations to change the United Nations' current policy of recognizing SWAPO as the only legitimate party in Namibia, in view of the recent attack by SWAPO guerilla forces in the border area?

¹ OJ No. C 36, 13.2.1978, p. 26

14a. Question by Mr POWER (H-40/79)

Subject : Respect for Human Rights within the European
Economic Community

In view of the European Council declaration on democratic freedom and human rights, and in view of the concern shown by the Community institutions for human rights universally, why has the Community neglected to apply the same standards to violation of human rights within its frontiers, particularly in Northern Ireland ?

15. Question by Mr FITCH (H-495/78)

Subject : Coal stocks in the Community

What is the present level of coal stocks in the Community?

16. Question by Mr SEEFELD (H-33/79)^x

Subject : Approximation of legislation in the Community
relating to traffic offences

Despite the increase in transfrontier travel by cars in the European Community, legislation relating to the punishment of traffic offences still varies widely from one Member State to another. The possibilities of enforcing foreign judicial decisions in this sphere are very limited. This repeatedly results in the authorities and officials concerned having to devote an excessive amount of time to enforcing the courts' decisions. We therefore ask the Commission :

What proposals does it intend to submit to the Council of Justice Ministers with a view to the earliest possible approximation of legislation in the Community relating to traffic offences?

What measures will it propose to supplement the European Convention on the Punishment of Road Traffic Offences of 30 November 1964 with a view to ensuring that foreign judicial decisions in this sphere are duly enforced?

^x Former oral question without debate (O-148/78), converted into a question for Question Time

17. Question by Mr FELLERMAIER (H-34/78)^x

Subject : Review body to examine the workings of the Commission

In his statement to the European Parliament in February 1978, the President of the Commission announced the creation of a review body of independent persons (council of wise men) to examine the workings of the Commission.

Would the Commission therefore state :

What were the criteria used in the selection of the members of this body?

Who are its members?

What are its terms of reference?

How many persons are involved in administrative support of the review body's work (e.g. secretarial and administrative assistance in the preparation of the report)?

Are these persons independent of the Commission or are they or former staff of the Commission involved?

Will the Commission make the report available to the European Parliament?

^x Former oral question without debate (O-139/78) - Document converted into a question for Question Time

18. Question by Mr Willi MÜLLER (H-42/78)^x

Subject: Health hazards of asbestos

In its resolution of 16 December 1977¹ adopted on the basis of a report by its Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection (Doc. 344/77) the European Parliament called on the Commission to take steps to restrict the use of asbestos, to press ahead with research into the development of substitutes and to take appropriate action on improving health protection at places of work where asbestos is used.

Will the Commission state :

What specific action has so far been taken to put Parliament's demands and recommendations into effect?

What progress has been made towards getting asbestos included in the list of dangerous substances (Council Directive of 27 June 1967)?

What practical conclusions has the Commission drawn from the fact that various Member States have independently adopted national bans or restrictions on the use of asbestos or are considering doing so?

Does the Commission recognize that the incidence of incapacity and death from asbestosis contracted in the course of asbestos spraying has risen alarmingly, and that improved protection at the place of work is therefore urgently necessary?

Can it be assumed that, in response to the need to safeguard public health and to prevent distortions of competition resulting from discrepancies between the different provisions adopted by the Member States, the Commission will submit a proposal for a directive to the Council as soon as possible?

^x Former oral question with debate (O-123/78) - Doc. 652/78), converted into a question for Question Time

¹ OJ No. C 6, 9.1.1978, p. 138

19. Question by Mrs KROUWEL-VLAM (H-43/78)^{x,xx}

Subject: Health protection

Between 1966 and 1975 the consumption of medicines increased by 156% in France and by 135% in Italy. This trend is not confined to these two countries and is causing concern among the medical profession throughout the Community.

The over-prescribing of medicines places a burden on the national health services and excessive or unreasonable self-medication is a threat to public health.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to halt excessive consumption and wastage of medicines?

Does the Commission not feel there is an urgent need to launch a preventive informational and educational public health campaign among consumers?

Since the Council has not adopted the directives of June 1976 on the advertizing of proprietary medicines, does the Commission intend to submit a new proposal for a directive? If so, how will it differ from the first proposal?

Is the Commission prepared to take account in any new directive of the requests which Parliament is currently drafting in an own-initiative report on self-medication?

20. Question by Mr RADOUX (H-493/78)

Subject: EEC-Turkey relations

What contribution particularly in the form of social and technological aid is the Community making to the measures that are necessary to rectify the political situation in Turkey?

^x Former oral question with debate (O-138/78) - Doc. 658/78), converted into a question for Question Time

^{xx} Will not be called if item 61 is kept on the agenda

21. Question By Mr DE CLERCQ (H-499/78)

Subject: Free industrial zone in the Carso area

The Commission is asked to explain why, in the current negotiations with Yugoslavia, it is thinking of allowing a free industrial zone to be established in the Carso area on both sides of the border between Italy and Yugoslavia, as this might have serious environmental, racial and economic consequences for the city of Trieste, which has never been able to benefit from the opportunities and advantages generously granted to other areas within the Community.

22. Question by Mr DEWULF (H-519/78)

Subject: Family situation of EEC scholarship-holders and trainees from the ACP countries

Can the Commission explain why, contrary to the normal practice for exchange scholarships, scholarship-holders and trainees whom it sponsors from the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and whose stay exceeds 3 months may not be accompanied by their spouses and, where appropriate, young children?

23. Question by Mr NOLAN (H-532/78)

Subject : Promoting employment

Does the Commission believe that recruitment standards for young people are deliberately set very high in industry and that if they were lowered more jobs could be created?

24. Question by Mr POWER (H-536/78)

Subject : International Year of the Child

Is it the intention of the Commission that the European Community should contribute in some way to the International Year of the Child?

25. Question by Lord BETHELL (H-3/79)

Subject : Air fares within the European Community

Have the Commission investigated the very high level of scheduled airline fares between cities of the Community, with particular reference to the restrictive measures imposed by the International Air Transport Association ? What action do they propose in order to mitigate this serious obstacle to travel within the Community ?

26. Question by Mr BROWN (H-4/79)

Subject : Carcinogenic content of German beer

Has the Commission's attention been drawn to the survey carried out by the Research Centre of Heidelberg concerning the carcinogenic content of German beer ? What action does the Commission propose to take in the light of that survey ?

27. Question by Mr PISONI (H-6/79)

Subject: European Social Fund contributions for 1978

It would appear that Member States have still not been notified of the Commission's decision of 22 December 1978 concerning the second series of European Social Fund contributions for 1978.

Can the Commission justify this delay and indicate what steps it intends to take to prevent any recurrences?

28. Question by Mr NOE' (H-7/79)

Subject: Application of the directive on commercial agents to intermediaries in the aviation sector

Could the Commission explain why it has taken no account of Parliament's vote of 12 September 1978¹ excluding the application of the directive on commercial agents to intermediaries in the aviation sector?

¹ OJ No. C 239, 9.10.1978, p. 17

29. Question by Mr DALYELL (H-8/79)

Subject : Sperm whales

Will the Commission recommend a Community ban on imports of Sperm Whale oil given the decision in December 1978 of the meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Tokio that Sperm Whales now be classed as protective stock ?

30. Question by Sir Geoffrey de FREITAS (H-9/79)

Subject : Importance of Community links with India

In view of India's strong democratic institutions, its geographical position, its huge population and the widespread use in India of one of our official languages, what plans has the Commission for establishing an office in New Delhi even if it necessitates the closure of its office in Bangkok ?

31. Question by Mr YEATS (H-10/79)

Subject : Alleviating unemployment caused by new
port technology

Would the Commission state whether any monies from the Social Fund are being used to alleviate unemployment caused by new port technology ?

32. Question by Mr van AERSSEN (H-12/79)

Subject: Purchase of subsidized butter by the German Democratic Republic

Is the Commission aware that the German Democratic Republic is buying up subsidized butter from the Community at low prices and then selling it at much higher prices to the military régime in Chile and, if so, how does it view this practice?

33. Question by Lord St. OSWALD (H-13/79)

Subject : New Multifibres Agreement

"In view of the continuance and possible expansion of the "Outward Processing" system for some European textiles, together with certain other disturbing trends, will the Commission undertake to keep a strict control over the imports of textile products, under the new Multifibres Agreement, and ensure that levels of imports laid down for individual countries and products will, under no circumstances, be exceeded?"

34. Question by Mr LAGORCE (H-18/79)

Subject: Supply of food to the Sahel countries

According to a press report which appeared in early March, the Sahel countries have, following the drought, again appealed to the international community to provide them 'as soon as possible and as efficiently as possible' with food supplies estimated at between 350,000 and 400,000 tonnes. What response has the Commission made, or does it intend making to this appeal?

35. Question by Mr DONDELINGER (H-19/79)

Subject: Sexual mutilation of women in black Africa

Does not the Commission consider that the sexual mutilation inflicted on thirty million African women, which has aroused the justified indignation of feminist movements in Europe, makes it even more essential to include provisions on the protection of basic human rights in the new Convention of Lomé?

36. Question by Mr McDONALD (H-21/79)

Subject: Recruitment of Irish staff

In view of the requirement of Article 27 of the Staff Regulations that officials should be recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Community, what steps are being taken by the Commission to ensure that Ireland is adequately represented in such recruitment?

37. Question by Mr BETTIZA (H-23/79)

Subject: Special Community assistance for the city of Naples

In the context of the Community's regional policy and the planned transfer of resources from North to South under the EMS, is the Commission considering measures to assist the Naples port sector, its urban transport system and its inadequate health and sanitary infrastructure?

38. Question by Mr OSBORN (H-24/79)

Subject : Cutlery and hand tool industries

What discussion has the Commission had with Ministers representing Consumers interests, Trade Ministers and Industry Ministers from Member Countries about the definition of country of origin to cover the assembly of finished products in the Community from components produced in third countries, as well as other Community countries, a situation particularly relevant to the cutlery and hand tool industries, so that consumers can have clear assurances about quality and country of origin ?

39. Question by Mr KAVANAGH (H-28/79)

Subject : Community aid to combat coastal erosion

Can the Commission state whether aid is available to combat coastal erosion, and provide for restoration where such erosion has occurred, either within the framework of infrastructure investment projects under the Regional Fund, or through other Community policies ?

40. Question by Mr NYBORG (H-30/79)

Subject: Fishing off Greenland

Will the Commission state whether Canada and France exceeded the quotas fixed by the EEC for fishing in Greenland waters in 1978 and, if they did, what action it has taken in this matter?

41. Question by Mr CHRISTENSEN (H-35/79)

Subject: Commission survey of natural and rural amenities

Which provision in the EEC Treaty has the Commission taken as its legal basis for drawing up a survey of natural and rural amenities in selected regions of the Community, and does it intend to use this survey to draw up plans at Community level for the use of recreational areas?

42. Question by Mr RYAN (H-38/79)

Subject : Oil Shortage

As Ireland is suffering serious damage to agricultural and industrial production and employment by reason of an acute shortage of petrol, diesel and fuel oils, what steps are being taken to implement community obligation for member states to come to one another's aid in the event of an oil shortage ?

43. Question by Mrs DUNWOODY (H-41/79)

Subject : Retrospective Alterations to Pensions of Community Officials

What is the Commission's policy about retrospective legislation which may adversely affect individuals, with particular reference to recent reductions made by the Commission in the pensions drawn by a number of Community officials of all grades who have already retired ?